

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A cover for a valve of an immersion suit, the cover being adapted to deform from a first shape to a second shape on action of an external force, wherein, in use, when the cover adopts the second shape it substantially protects at least a portion of the valve from the external force.
2. A cover as claimed in claim 1, comprising a base end and a head end connected to each other by at least one connecting portion.
3. A cover as claimed in claim 2, wherein the at least one connecting portion resists flow of fluid therethrough whereas the head end and the base end substantially allow the flow of fluids therethrough.
4. A cover as claimed in claim 1, wherein the cover is adapted to deform from the first shape to the second shape on action of the external force from substantially any direction.
5. A cover as claimed in claim 1, the cover having a substantially tubular shape.
6. A cover as claimed in claim 2, wherein the diameter of the base is greater than the diameter of the head.
7. A cover as claimed in claim 5, wherein the tubular shape tapers inwardly the base end to the head end.
8. A cover as claimed in claim 7, wherein the cover is frusto-conical in shape.
9. A cover as claimed in claim 2, wherein the base end is polygonal.

10. A cover as claimed in claim 2, wherein the head end is substantially circular.
11. A cover as claimed in claim 2, wherein the connecting portion transforms from a polygonal cross section at the base end, to a circular cross section at the head end.
12. A cover as claimed in claim 2, wherein the head end includes a mechanism to reduce the likelihood of snagging.
13. A cover as claimed in claim 12, wherein the mechanism comprises a mesh screen.
14. A cover as claimed in claim 1, wherein the cover is formed from a plurality of conjoined segments.
15. An immersion suit comprising at least one valve, and at least one cover as claimed in claim 1.
16. An immersion suit comprising at least one valve, and at least one cover as claimed in claim 2.
17. An immersion suit as claimed in claim 16, wherein the at least one connecting portion extends away from the immersion suit.
18. An immersion suit as claimed in claim 16, wherein the base end is secured to the immersion suit in the vicinity of the valve, such that the valve is in fluid communication with a bore of the cover.

19. An immersion suit as claimed in claim 16, wherein the at least one valve comprises at least one air exhaust and when the cover adopts the second shape, the at least one connecting portion is of sufficient surface area to substantially protect the at least one air exhaust.
20. An immersion suit as claimed in claim 19, wherein the at least one connecting portion extends to a length at least equal to the distance between any one point where the said connecting portion is secured to the immersion suit and the furthest air exhaust from that one point.
21. An immersion suit as claimed in claim 15, wherein the valve is a one-way air exhaust valve.
22. An immersion suit as claimed in claim 19, wherein when the cover adopts the second shape, air is permitted to escape from within the immersion suit through the at least one valve exhaust.
23. An immersion suit as claimed in claim 15, wherein the external force is caused by fluid moving with a shearing action with respect to the valve.